

# THE PROTESTATION

PROTESTED:

OR,  
A short Remonstrance, shewing what  
is principally required of all those that have  
or doe take the last *Parliamentary*  
PROTESTATION.

Eccl. 5. 45.

*When thou vowest a vow unto God, deferre not to pay it; for  
he hath no pleasure in fooles: pay that which thou hast  
vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that  
thou shouldest vow, and not pay.*

*Henry Burdon*



*Printed in the Yeare, MDCXLI.*

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THE  
P R O T E S T A T I O N  
P R O T E S T E D .



ECCLES. 5-4, 5:

*When thou vowest a vow unto GOD, deferre not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fooles : pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*



When in the Scale of Conscience rightly informed, I weigh the words of the *Protestation*, and of this Exhortation of the Holy Ghost together, I cannot but tremble, when I see what small account most doe make of so solemne a Vow, as they so solemnly take upon them in the said *Protestation*.

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For when Ministers and People have taken the *Protestation*, and have solemnly vowed to maintaine the Doctrine of our Church, so farre as it is opposit to *Popery*; Doe they withall presently set upon the performance of this their *Vow*? Doe they not further deferre to pay it? Surely if they doe deferre it, the holy Ghost calls them *fooles*, in whom God hath no pleasure. And it had bin better for them never to have *vowed*, then to *vow* and not pay.

*Object.* But how doe they deferre thus to pay their *vow* thus made?

*Ans.* In that they doe not presently renounce, and protest against all *Popery*, and for ever disclaime and abandon all Communion with it.

*Object.* Why, will they say, what Communion have we *Protestants* with *Popery*? We doe all renounce it.

*Ans.* In words we doe renounce it, but indeed we retaine it, and have close Communion with it: so farre are we from keeping the *vow* thus made.

*Ob.* But what *Popery* doe we *Protestants* of the church of *England* retaine with us, or hold Communion with?

*Ans.* Wee hold Communion with *Popery*, so long as we doe publicly retaine and maintaine any of the Doctrines of *Popery*. And the Doctrines of *Popery* which we retaine and maintaine, are these. *First*, The imposition of the Liturgy. *Secondly*, The Discipline. *Thirdly*, The Government. *Fourthly*, The Ceremonies.

*Object.* But these being as yet established by Law, we may not cast them off, till the Law which set them up, be abrogated, which must be by Act of Parliament. And we protest against *Popery* to cast it out, as farre as lawfully we may, and no otherwise.

*Ans.*



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*An.* First, all Lawes are to be interpreted according to their cleare intention and end. Now the Law for *Reformation* never intended to allow or set up *Poperie* in this Church of *England*. Secondly, if any humane lawes be found to be contrary to Gods word, they are *invalid and void, ipso facto*. And it will appeare, that imposition of a devised *Liturgy, humane Rites and Ceremonies, Prælati- cally government and Discipline*, are directly contrary to Gods word. Thirdly, having once made this solemne *Protestation and Vow*, against all *Popery*, and finding that the particulars aforesaid are branches of *Popery*, we are bound *ipso facto* forthwith to have no more *Communion* with them, but utterly to renounce them.

*Ob.* But what if the *Parliament* did not intend or understand by *Popery*, the aforesaid things, as the *Litur- gie, Discipline, Government, Ceremonies used in our Church, and by Law established*? Shall wee presume to ex- tend the sense of the *Protestation* further then the first ma- kers thereof intended. And the *Prelates* (wee presume) would never so readily have subscribed to the *Protestati- on*, had they dreamed any such sense to lye hid under the name of *Popery*, as their *Hierarchy, with their Liturgie, Rites, Ceremonies, Discipline, Government*; for then they had in the *Protestation* protested against all these, and should have given their hands and votes, for the rooting of them out of this Church.

*Answ.* First, This we are sure off, and 'tis most cleare by the expresse words of the *Protestation*, that they in- tended it against all *Popery*. Secondly, They expresse themselves, and professe thus farre, that the words of the *Protestation* are not to be extended to the maintaining of

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any forme of *Worship, Discipline, or Government*; nor of any *Rites or Ceremonies* in the said Church of *England*. *Ergo*, wee doe not, we may not protest for the maintenance of these. Thirdly, suppose that at the first making of the *Protestation in the Parliament*, these particulars afore mentioned were not reckoned in the *Catalogue of all Popery*: yet no good Christian will or can deny, that the Honourable House of *Commons* did not at all intend to exclude what ever shall be found to pertaine to *Popery* as a branch thereof. *And therefore wee may boldly conclude, that if the fore-mentioned things shall be found to be, and that no small branches of Popery, the Protestation hath an edge to cut them off all at one stroke.* Fourthly, we are all in an erected hope of such a *Reformation* intended by this most noble *Parliament*, as cannot justly challenge the name of *Reformation*, unlesse all *Popery* be made to be packing, which of necessity must carry with her all trinkets and baggage, with all her pompous equipage, among whose sumpters, the *Hierarchy*, with all its *Pontificalibus* of *Service, Ceremonies, Discipline, Train, Courts*, may challenge to goe in the foremost ranke. Fifthly, and lastly, suppose it could be supposed by any rationall man, that the House of *Commons* could have no such thought, as implicitey to include the aforesaid particulars in the fardell of *Popery*: or that they could possibly intend the maintaining of those things still, of which they expressely say, *That the words of the Protestation are not to be extended to the maintaining of any forme of Worship, Discipline, or Government, Rites or Ceremonies; or that these things should not be removed but maintained still*: What then? Shall private and particular *Christians*, knowing these things to be *Popery* and *Antichristian*, being also bound by their solemn

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*Vow and Protestation*, never reforme themselves, untill they see a generall *Reformation* over the whole Land? What if they shall never live to see this? Will they against their *knowledge*, against their *Vow & Protestation* live and dye *Votaries & Communicants* in that Service, *Schoole-boyes and Punies* under the *Ferula* of that *Discipline*, *Vassals* under that *Government*, *Conformists* to those *Rites and Ceremonies*, all which are very *Popery* and *Popish Innovations*?

*Ob.* But how doth it appeare, that the forementioned particulars are branches of *Popery*? If our *Conscience* could bee convinced hereof by the Word of *GOD*, then surely are wee bound both by *Gods Word*, and by our *Vow* and *Protestation* presently to renounce and abandon these things, and to have no longer any *Communion* with them.

*An.* It is most true, that nothing can resolve, regulate, and settle the *Conscience*, but the Word of *God* in the evidence of it. Now most cleare it is by the *Scripture*, that the *Liturgie, Discipline, Government, Rites, and Ceremonies* of the Church of *England*, are all of them so many branches of *Popery*. For prooffe hereof, first for the *Liturgie*; this is a branch of *Popery* in two generall respects: First, in regard of the whole frame and matter of it, as being translated out of the *Romish Latin Liturgie*, as is confessed in the *Booke of Martyrs*, see for this the late *Parallel betweene the English Liturgie, and the Masse-booke*. I omit to say any thing here of the many vicious particulars throughout the service booke, which run, as the corrupt bloud, through all the veines of it, and are by others sufficiently discovered. This is enough to shew it to be *Popish*. The second generall



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nerall is, the imposition of it upon all mens Consciences. Which bare *imposition* alone, were the Liturgy in it self never so free from other faults, yet being a service of mens devising, the imposition (I say) makes it a branch of *Popery*. For *Popery* (we know) is *Antichristianisme*. And *Antichristianisme* is an *Opposition* to christ, so as this imposition upon the Conscience, is an opposing and overthrowing of Christs Kingly Office, who is the sole King and Lord over the Soule & Conscience; an Office incommunicable to any Creature, or power in Heaven or Earth. Whereupon *Iohn* saith, *who is a liar, but he that denyeth that Iesus is the Christ, He is Antichrist*. Now to deny *Iesus* to be the sole anointed King of his Church, is to deny him to be the *Christ*. And hee that sets up man as Lord over the Consciences, in prescribing and imposing what service of God he pleaseth of humane invention, denyeth *Iesus* to be the *Christ*, to wit, to be the sole King of his Church, who is the sole *Law-giver* to the *Common-wealth* of *Israel*, in his spirituall Kingdome.

And for this cause the Pope is proved to be that *Antichrist*, who is \* *the Adversary that exalteth himselfe above all that is called GOD, or that is worshipped*; so that he as God sitteth in or over the Temple of GOD (which is every mans Conscience) shewing himselfe that he is God. Now in nothing doth *Antichrist* exalt himselfe more, then in usurping Christs power in giving Lawes, whereby he exerciseth a Tyranny over the true Temple of God, over the spirituall Kingdome of Christ. And this tyranny is chiefly exercised in usurping dominion over our Faith and Conscience in the worship and service of God, which they place in the Liturgy. This is the highest pride and presumption of *Antichrist* that possibly can

\* 2. Thes. 2.  
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can be. This is that *will-worship*, or a worship invented of mans will and choice, which the *Apostle* \* expressly \* *Col. 2, 23.* condemneth and brandeth, *as the highest tyranny, which to be subject unto is the spoiling & cheating men of their salvation* (as we read at large *col. 2. v. 8 18.*) and a separating us from our Head and King (*Christ. v. 19.* and an evacuation of his death. *v. 20.*) The Imposition therefore of a *Liturgie*, upon the Conscience, devised by men, & pretended for the worship and service of God, yea and the onely divine publike Worship of his Church, is a maine branch of *Popery*, as being the Character of *Antichrist*, or *Antichristianisme*, being convertible termes. Thus it is as plaine, as briebe, that the imposing of a *Liturgie* of mans devising upon the Conscience is the pretended Service of God (though indeed it is rather the service of man, and which God condemneth as a \* *vaine worship of him*) is a maine branch of *Popery*. *Mat. 159.*

Secondly, for Ceremonies of mans devising in the worship of GOD, and imposed upon the Conscience, these being of the same Nature with, as being a part of *Liturgie*, are by the same reasons (as before) proved to be *Popery*.

Thirdly, for *Discipline* (which stands briefly in correction of manners, & inflicting of Censures, as *Excommunication*, such as is and hath beene exercised in the Church of *England* by the *Prelates* ever since the pretended *Reformation* in this point) that this is also another maine branch of *Popery*, doe but compare it with that *Discipline* in the Church of *Rome*, and you shall find it in all points to jumpe and agree, as you must of necessity conclude, if *Romes Discipline* be *Poperie*, then certainly our *English Discipline* is *Popery* too. For in nothing (I say) doe they differ, so as the *Disci-*

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pline of our Church being false, & counterfeited, because Popish, and so our Church wanting the true *Discipline* which ought to be one of the three markes of a visible true Church, as it is noted in our Homilies: the church of *England* wants this mark at the least. And if the *Sacraments* be not *duly administred*, as being mixed & corrupted with a service of mans devising, and ministred pell mell (as in the *Lords Supper*) to ignorant and prophane persons, then for ought I see, it wants a second marke of a visible true Church, and if (as lately, and still in many places) the word of God in the preaching of it bee generally corrupted, as when the full and free liberty of it in sundry points of *Evangelicall truth*, is restrained and prohibited by orders and edicts, not yet called in, and damned; by this reckoning it should want the third mark, and so much the more, in case the calling of the *Ministry* it selfe should prove a piece of *Popery* too. But this by the way, onely it leads us the way to the next point, which is the government of the Church of *England*.

Fourthly, then for the Government of the Church of *England*, by *Arch-bishops, Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Deanes, Commissaries, Officials*, and the rest of that fraternity: if this be not *Popery*, yea and a top-branch of it, I know not what is. Sure we are, not any one of all this rabble is found to be in the *Scripture*; and therefore of divine Institution this Government is not: And consequently, Christian it is not. It must needs then be of *Antichrists Order*, and Papall meerely. So as if *Romes Hierarchy* be the top-branch of *Popery* in that Church: how can it be denied, that the *Hierarchy* here in *England* is the top-branch of *Popery* in this church? For if we looke upon this *Hierarchy* from *Canterbury* to *Carlile*, and goe through all their Courts, their Offices,

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Offices, and Administrations therein, wee shall therein behold the perfect image of the Papall Beast, from horne to hoofe. And if any will object here that the subordinate *Ministers* beare a part in this *Government*: (Alas!) that's but a meere mockery. For these are but the *Prelatos Curates*, and a company of *Priests* little differing from *Romes order of Priest-hood*, in the, estimats of our *Prelates*, saving that they are not shaven, and have bin of late prevented of being *Sacrificers*. But a part in the *Hierarchicall Government* they have none, unlesse a dumb Priest commonly, or some Doctor now and then be the mouth to thunder out *Excommunication* in their Courts, which the poore Curate at the *Commissaries* beck must publish in the *congregation*. And to these Curates consideration I resorte it, whether they be able truely out of good premises to conclude themselves to be the *Ministers of Christ* lawfully called, who all of them doe immediately derive their Ministry from the *Antichristian Hierarchy*, or *Papall Prelacy*, as the sole foundation thereof. But this suffice briefly to prove the *Government of the church of England* by *Arch-bishops* and *Bishops*, &c. (False and usurped Titles) to be a top-branch of Popery. If here it be objected, that the *Government of Arch-bishops and Diocesan Bishops* was before Popery came up, or *Antichrist* was mounted on his throne: I answer, first, that the *Government of Arch-bishops and Diocesan Bishops* was antiently much different from the *Papall Hierarchicall Government* afterwards, whose Courts and sole *Prelaticall Jurisdictions* were not known in the *Primitive Ages* long after the *Apostles*. Secondly, the *Government of Arch-bishops and Diocesan Bishops*, at the very best, and when they first sprung up, was even



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from the wel-head corrupted, as being an human device and the first spring of the Myſtery of iniquity, which the further it run, the more corrupt it grew, till it had its full confluence in muddy Tiber, the See of Rome, by whose inundation Antichrist, having boyſed up his main ſailes, could eaſily compaſſe in the whole Eaſterne chriſtian world. Thirdly, the Hierarchicall Government in England, is a main arm of that Sea; ſo it hath altered nothing of its former property, when it was a limbe of the Papacie, ſaving that before the Reformation they held immediately from the Pope, and now, eſpecially of later dayes, they hold by the ſame false pretended title, which the Pope himſelfe holds by, namely from Chriſt, and by divine authority. Witneſſe Dr. Hals ſweaty diſcourſes. And Dr. Pocklington ſhewes us a brieſe Pedigree of the preſent titular Arch-biſhop of Canterbury, ſaying, \* *Miſerable men were we, if he that now ſitteth Arch-biſhop of Canterbury, could not derive his ſucceſſion from Saint Auguſtine, St. Auguſtine from St. Gregory, St. Gregory from St. Peter.* So he. Onely, here he failes, and ſo becomes miſerable, that though he can prove *Canterburies* ſucceſſion from Rome, yet never *Rome's* from Peter. And ſo a ſeverall miſery followes upon it, that our Hierarchicall Government being a limbe of the Papall, and ſo a top-branch of Popery, it is now univerſally of all good Chriſtians in England protested againſt, as worthy to be cut off, & caſt out, as a fruitleſſe, withering branch, and to bee plucked up by the Rootes, as a tree twice dead, and as a plant not of Gods planting.

*Object.* But if it be thus, that for the reaſons, aforeſaid the whole Government of the Church of England ought to be eradicated, together with the Liturgy, Discipline



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*pline, and Ceremonies, instead thereof.*

I answer briefly : First, understanding the Church of *England* to be none other, then a *Nationall* Church, it will be very difficult, if not rather impossible to constitute it so, as is agreeable in all points to a true and visible Congregation of Christ. For a particular church or Congregation rightly collected and constituted, consists of none, but such as are visible living Members of Christ the head, and visible Saints under him, the one and onely King of Saints : but so it is not with a *Nationall* church : all the Members thereof are not visible Saints, or visible living Members, wherein the greatest part of a Nation commonly is found to consist of persons either ignorant or profane. \* For as the *Scripture* saith, *Though the children of Israel bee as the sand of the Sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved.* And yet that was a *Nationall* Church without *Parallell* : so as in the *Reformation* of such a *Nationall* Church as this, which hath bin so universally overspread with profanenesse, and darknesse, so long beslaved under the yoke of Prelaticall Tyranny, under *Egyptian* Task-masters, under manifold *Romish* Superstitions, formall Service, will-worship, universall false and loose Discipline, innumerable, either false, or unprofitable, or idle Teachers, Non-residents, \* dumbe-dogs, so as whole Countries for want of good Ministers, (who have beene every where cast out) and whole Countries, yea the whole Land in comparison are overgrowne with Papists, or Atheists, or those that know not what true Religion meanes : where shall wee begin to reforme? Alas ! in comparison of the true Religion indeed (which stands not in a bare profession but in power, not in a bare name of Christianity, but in

*Isai. 20. 22.*

*Isai. 26. 10.*

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the nature of it; not in the mixture of mens inventions, but in the purity of Christs owne Ordinances) the Religion in *England* is very farre degenerate, and but a while agoe was almost wholly slidden backe into the very puddle of Popery: yet not all, but as it was said of the Church of *Sardis*, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, but thou art dead; yet it were* \* *a few names, which had not defiled their garments*: Even so in *England*, there are a few, yea I trust many thousands of Saints, though (in comparison of the whole Land) *but a few names, a remnant*; whose hearts are perfect before God. *Where then shall the Reformation begin now in England? Surely in the new forming of a Church, such as God requireth in his Word, Christs voyce must first bee heard, to call forth his sheepe, and to gather them into their flockes, and folds.* For ~~England~~ the Church is properly a Congregation of Beleevers, called out from the rest of the world. For so saith the Lord \* *come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the uncleane thing, and I will receive you.* A strange speech, *And be ye separate*; Surely Gods people must be separatists from the world and from false churches, to become a pure & holy people unto the Lord, and he saith to the Prophet *Jeremy*, *If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt bee as my mouth*; let them returne unto thee, but returne not thou unto them, & surely in a corrupt church (as this is) and a long time hath bin, by reason of the great *Apostacy* (and especially the wickednesse of the *Pralates*) wee should doe as the *Apostles* did when they came to plant churches in a Country where the Gospell had not been formerly preached. First they taught the people, and then those which heard and beleeved, were formed into a Church or Congregation. But here are (blessed bee God

2 Cor. 6. 17

Ier. 15. 20.

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God ) many people already fitted to make up holy assemblies or Churches. Well then, let it be the first degree of *Reformation* to begin and call forth all those into severall *Congregations*, who are fitted, and who desire to draw neere unto *Christ*, in a holy communion with him in the purity of his *Ordinances*, and thus let Gods word run & have a free passage, in calling in such as God shall draw unto him, in what place soever they be found. Nor can we thinke, at the first especially, that every assembly of people collected in their severall Parishes, is fit to make up a congregation, & so qualified as *christ* requireth. For how many Parishes in *England* will be found, where scarce one is able to give a reason of the hope that is in him ?

*Ob.* But shall not good Preachers be set up in every Parish, that the people may be instructed and so fitted to be members of a *Congregation*, such as afore is mentioned ?

*Ans.* No doubt of that, so farre as is possible to provide Preachers.

*Ob.* But what shall the people do in the meantime, who are ignorant, & prophane, though not notoriously wicked ? for have they not received Baptisme ? are they not christians ? shall they not then bee admitted into the Communion of the other Sacraments ?

*Ans.* For this, every Minister ought to be very diligent and carefull to see, that ordinary, prophane, and ignorant persons be not admitted to the sacrament. \* The lame & Deaf, 158 the blind is not to be offered up in sacrifice.

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*Obj.* But admit that such as are ordinary prophane persons and have little or no knowledge of God, be admitted to the Sacrament pell mell : may not godly persons communicate with them, and therein not sin ?

*Ans.* For that, let such as are godly looke to it. For  
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if Gods *Ordinances* be profaned (as they are by profane and ignorant persons comming to the Lords Table, then others also that communicate with them are guilty of the same prophanation of them. \* *A little leaven le-*

\* *1 Cor. 5. 6.* *veneth the whole lump.* The *Apostle* applyes it to a mixt Communion. *Let us keepe the feast* (saith hee) *to wit,* in participating of *Christ our Passeeover* in the Sacrament, *not with the old leaven, &c.* And thereupon he tells them

\* *Eph. 5. 5. 7* *I writ unto you in an Epistle not to company with fornicators, &c.* And \* *This ye know, that now horemonger, nor uncleane person, nor covetous man, hath any inheritance in the Kingdome of Christ. Be not therefore partakers with them.*

*Ob.* But if *Congregations* be so mixed, as they cannot, or are not secured, shall godly men for that cause deprive themselves of the Ordinance?

*Ans.* First, there is no necessity, that men in using the ordinance should sin by communicating with others in the profanation of holy things. Secondly, It is not Gods ordinance, that his holy things should be prophane-

\* *Mat. 7. 6.* *ned. \* Cast not your pearles before Swine, nor your holy*  
\* *'sai 1. 12. things to dogs. \* Who required these things at your hands,*  
*to tread in my Courts? And yet their Oblations, their*  
*Sabbaths, their solemne assemblies, were Gods orders. But*  
*because they were polluted and profaned by those that*  
*joynd in them, therefore the Lord abhors them. \* Wash*  
*you, make you cleane, &c.*

\* *Per. 16.* *Ob.* But what's this to godly persons communicating with prophane?

\* *2 Thes. 2. 3* *Ans.* To communicate with known evill doers (which even in their presuming to communicate in the ordinances, doe evill in their doing of evill, is to partake of their evill deeds. \* Be not mingled with such (saith

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the Apostle ) that they may be ashamed. And v. 6. *Wee command you Brethren in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, that yee withdraw your selves from every brother, that walketh disorderly, &c.*

*Ob.* But if it be so, where can a godly man communicate without sin? For where are not the Congregations mixed?

*An.* It is true, that if there be none other Congregations allowed, but such as are in Parishes, this confession cannot be avoided. Therefore of necessity there must be Liberty granted of setting up Churches, or Congregations, where *Christs Ordinances* are administred in their purity, and so where none are admitted Members of the Congregation, but such as are approved of by the whole Assembly, for their profession and conversation, as against which there is no just exception.

*Ob.* But would you have other Congregations, then such as are limited to every Parish? How will this stand with a *Nationall Church*, such as is the church of *England*? This would make a division, and a separation.

*Ans.* We must looke in the first place, what *Christ* commandeth, and what manner of *Congregations* hee requireth, and how qualified. If a *State* will set up a *nationall Church*, wherein many things, out of reason of *State*, are tolerated, & prescribed for order sake (as they call it) and if there be such a necessity, necessity hath no Law: but let not this exclude and barre out the free use of such *Congregations*, as whereof the spirituall *Comen-wealth* of *Israel* consisteth, over which *Christ* as King immediately, raigneth by his Spirit and Word, in the beauty and purity of his *ordinances*. Let not the Consciences of Gods people be bound, where *Christ* hath purchased liberty. And where *Christs Congregati-*

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ons are set up, however they are separate from the world in the corruptions thereof, yet they are not separate from the Civill State, but are peaceable members thereof, subject and obedient to all the good and just Lawes thereof. Yea where such *Congregations* are erected and allowed of by a Civill State, they are both a strength and beauty, and procure many blessings unto it. They are unto a Civill State, as that *fulminatrix legio*, that thundring Legion in the *Emperour Antoninus* his army (as he called it) which consisting wholly of *Christians* among his other *Heathen Legions*, did by their Prayers procure refreshing showers to the whole Army when it was sore distressed with drowgth, and terrible storms on the other side, to the disconfeiture of the enemy.

κορ υ'οβιλας  
λεγειων

\* *Tim. 2. 1.* And therefore the Apostle exhorts his Christians \* to pray for Kings, & such as are in authority, that wee may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlinesse & honesty. And *Ier. 29. 7.* Pray unto the Lord for the City of your captivity: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace; implying, that it is the duty of Civill Princes and States, *Heathen or Christian*, to protect, or tolerate the true *Christian Religion* in their Kingdomes, as well as of the true *Christians*, and Professors to pray for them. For Christs Kingdome being spirituall, is so farre from being any prejudice to Civill States, that it is the very glory and safety of them. And therefore the *Emperour Domitian* (under whom was moved the second persecution, and by whom the Apostle *Iohn* was banished into *Pathmos*) hearing that Christs Kingdome was celestially, and not of this world, recalled his Edict for the persecution (*Euseb. Eccl. Hist. li. 3. c. 15.*) so as thereupon it ceased.

Ob. But that there shall be an order of church-government

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ment established in a *National Church*, and withall a liberty left for other Church-assemblies, exempted from this government, this may be a meanes to foment factious and envious emulations in a State, to the disturbing of the peace thereof.

*Ans.* For this, first, there be good Lawes for civill Government. Secondly, that any one among the exempted Congregations doe incorrigibly misbehave themselves, the Law can take order with them. Thirdly, let no man blame them, before they try them. Fourthly, it hath bin an old Stratagem of *Satan* still to lay all the blame of what ever disaster, upon the *Christians*, as *Nero* did. Fifthly, it cannot be expected, but where ever the Gospel commeth in its power and purity, it will kindle coales, and stirre up debate, as *Christ* saith, it sets the Father against the Son, and the Sonne against the Father, *Mat. 10. 21* &c. But this is accidentally, in respect of the malignant objects it meets withall, though naturall too, in respect of the good subjects, in whom it is, and by whom it is sincerely professed, for it fills them with zeale & plain dealing in reprovng of sinne, which the world cannot away withall. Thus it hath done in all ages. And God in the \*beginning after the fall, upon the revealing of \* *Ge. 19. 9.* *Christ*, put an unreconcilable enmity, and deadly hatred *Acts. 7.* betweene the seed of the Serpent, and of the woman, betweene the Elect and Reprobate to the Worlds end. And if for this every civill state should shut out the true Religion, where would there be left any true Church upon the Earth?

*Ob.* But the Church-way of independency is too strict, and cannot be content with a mediocrity, but aspires to such a perfection of purity, as men are not capable of; and therefore such will of necessity be envied and



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maligned, which will be cause of divisions.

*Ans.* As if all true Christians were not exhorted every where, & so bound to strive for perfection, so much as is possible, as we reade *Matth.* 5. 20. 48. *Phil.* 3. 12. *Col.* 1. 28. & 4. 12. 2. *Tim.* 3. 17. and every where in the Scripture is perfect holinesse required, as *Ephes.* 4. 12. 2. *Cor.* 7. 1. *Let us* (saith the Apostle) *cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh & spirit, perfecting holinesse in the feare of God.* See also *Heb.* 5. 12. & 6. 1. & c. And for envy, were there but once set up amongst us some such Congregations, as come neereſt to the Rule of Gods Word, both in *Church-constitutions*, and in Graces ſutable, they would draw no leſſe love and liking to them, when wee ſhould ſee in them the beauty and glory of Chriſt more ſhining forth in them, then ever this Land hath yet ſeene. And however the world accounts ſtriſtneſſe, yet none are admitted Members thereof, but ſuch as are both willing and deſirous, and doe freely enter into Covenant to obſerve all the conditions and orders thereof according to Gods Word: and who ſo are over, in, and of this *Congregation*, they find in it nothing that is grievous, but Chriſts ſweetneſſe \* whoſe yoake is eaſie, and his burthen light.

\* *Mat.* 11. 29. 30. *Ob.* But if ſuch *Congregations* were ſet up, which are not confined to any one Pariſh, but collected out of many places, or out of many Pariſhes, it would perhaps ſtirre up the parochiall *Ministers*, or ſome, at leaſt, to envy and malignity, when they ſhould ſee the beſt Chriſtians in all their Pariſh to be under another *Ministry*, and members of another *Congregation*, and by this meanes alſo ſhould their wages be diminifhed.

*Ans.* Firſt, if Chriſtians, living in a Pariſh, ſhall find juſt cauſe of ſeparating themſelves from ſuch a *Congregation*



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*gregation*, as wherein great Scandalls and offences are constantly given, so as they cannot with a good conscience, and without dishonour to God & his Ordinances communicate with such an assembly, whereof the greatest part consists of prophane and ignorant persons (as aforesaid) but are forced to joyne themselves with such *Congregations*, where no such offences be : shall any *Ministers* be so unchristian, as to envy this ? Or if they doe, let them reforme their owne *Congregations*, and take away all such scandalls, and separate the pretious from the vile, and administer the *Ordinances of Christ* purely and holily, and set up *Christs Government* in their *Congregations*, that so they may retaine those honest soules, which otherwise are forced to forsake the pudled streames, to enjoy the sweet, fresh, & pure fountaine of living waters. Nor will the *Ministers and Pastors* of such *Independent Congregations* looke after any such wages, as the parochiall *Ministers* challenge to themselves, as *Tithes*, or the like. No surely, they are, and will be content that such competent maintenance as the *Members* of their severall *Congregations* respectively, shall freely, without any compulsion (as is used in *Tithes*) allow unto them. Now let any that professe to be the *Ministers of Christ*, maligne other, either *Ministers* or people, who are desirous to enjoy *Christs Ordinances*, in as much purity as may be, and with as much liberty of conscience, as *Christ* hath priviledged them withall.

Obj. But the Parliament now being about a Reformation, as the removing of all *Antichristianisme* & *Poperie*, as the *Hierarchicall Government*, & *Ceremonies* purged, the *Liturgy*, and *Discipline*, what Government shall be set up in this *Nationall Church* ?

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*Ans.* The Lord strengthen and direct the *Parliament* in so great and glorious a *Worke*; and blessed bee God who hath raised up such instruments for such a worke, and who hath put in their hearts to be so zealous and unanimous for the perfecting of it so farre as is possible, and may stand with the Nature of a *Nationall Church*? But as for the manner of *Government* of a *Nationall Church*, because it hath no patterne in the *Scripture* now under the *Gospell*, who can herein prescribe or advise any thing. But first of all, if good *Preachers* be set up in every *Parish*, the naughty & scandalous being removed, and then for the better and speedier supply hereof, the *Vniversities* and *Grammer-schools* be purged, and better *Governours* and *Ministers* set up: so shall the people be taught, that they perish not for want of knowledge. As for the manner of *Government* of *Parishes*, whether by a *Presbytery*, or otherwise, that (as being, for its externall forme and frame, of a politicke Nation) I leave to the prudence of those, in whose hands it is put: let it be what it will, so as still a due respect bee had to those *Coneregations* and *Churches*, which desire an exemption and liberty of enjoying *Christs ordinances* in such a purity, as a *Nationall Church* is not possibly capable of. And what ever *Liturgy*, or *Ceremonies*, or *Discipline*, are left to accompany this *Nationall Church-government*, 'tis indifferent with us, so wee may enjoy our *christian liberty* in the true use of such *ordinances*, and of such *independent Church-government*, as *Christ* the onely *Law-giver* of his *Church*, and *Lord* of the conscience, hath left unto us in his word.

*Obj.* But *independent Churches*, being absolute in themselves, & exempted from a superior *Jurisdiction*

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## *The Protestation protested,*

n of others, and yet not exempt from possibility of erring : what Law is left to reduce them from their error? or that they persist in their obstinacy, what power shall censure, or correct them?

*Ans.* First, they have Christs law to regulate them.

Secondly, they have the Law of Christ, which is by love to serve one another. They have the Law of association & confederation with other churches to consult, advise, and conferre with, in matters of doubt or question. And if after all other remedies any be obstinate in his, or their error, they are liable to excommunication, either in the same Congregation, if it bee a particular person, and the error great, or from other Churches, if the whole Congregation have offended, and doe stiffely maintaine a dangerous error, which yet is rarely seene in a well constituted Congregation, consisting of meet members. And if at any time such a thing should fall out, which cannot grow but frō some root of apostacy, particular or generall : if the offence doe reflect also upon the Lawes of the Civill state, which are made against knowne Heresies, or Blasphemy, or Idolatry, and the like, the offenders are obnoxious to the civill power. So little feare there is, that any *independent Congregation*, or any member thereof, should be exempt from condigne censure, where just cause is given either Ecclesiasticall or civill.

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... of others, and yet not exempt from possibility of  
... : what law is left to render them free?  
... or that they persist in their obstinacy  
... of this country, or some other  
... First, they have Christ's law to regulate them  
... Secondly, they have the Law of Christ, which is  
... to have one another, they have a law of love  
... to consider one another with the same  
... and consider which in matters of doubt or  
... And if after all other remedies may be  
... his or their country, and liable to excommunication  
... either in the same Congregation, or in some  
... persons and the church, or from other Churches  
... the whole Congregation have offended, and do finally  
... maintaining a dangerous error, which is rarely  
... in a well constituted Congregation, consisting of  
... members. And in any time such a thing should fall  
... out, which cannot grow but to some root of  
... particular or general: if the offence do rest  
... upon the Laws of the Civil State, which are  
... first known, then they should be removed  
... the like offences are oppositions to the civil  
... So little care there is that any should be  
... how many members thereof, though it be  
... continue standing, which just cause is given  
... of this civil or civil.

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